



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE JERRY PATTERSON, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

Tyler 4th grader wins Texas Travels essay contest

Vividly detailed journal of Coronado's servant takes top honors

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AUSTIN — Caldwell Arts Academy's Quinn Boozer, 9, is the Fourth Grade Grand Prize winner of the 2012 Texas Travels essay contest, sponsored by the Texas General Land Office's Save Texas History Program.

Quinn's entry, an imagined journal, tells the story of Coronado's ill-fated quest for gold from the perspective of his servant, Juan Antonio Hernandez. Though fictional, Quinn packed the journal with well-researched facts about the infamous conquistador and included vivid details of life on the frontier.

"Quinn's essay takes on an old story from a refreshing perspective," said Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, who selected the winners. "Texas history was made by ordinary men and women facing extraordinary circumstances, just like Juan's journal so clearly shows."

As an orphan raised by the church, Juan was eager to join Coronado on his quest, Quinn writes. "He says that if I say yes we will travel far north to look for the lost cities of gold. Of course I said yes," Juan writes on September 7, 1539.

Juan's entries continue through 1542 and include stories of starving in the desert and feasting on buffalo meat, as well as personal observations about Coronado's disappointment after failing to find gold. "This essay was exciting, just like Texas history," Patterson said.

Quinn's winning essay - selected from about 1,500 entries - earns him round-trip airline tickets for four to San Antonio from any Southwest Airlines destination in Texas, hotel accommodations for two nights and complimentary dining, as well as tickets to attractions provided by the San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau. Holly Chilek was Quinn's teacher. Ten finalists per grade win Save Texas History backpacks, a Certificate of Appreciation signed by Commissioner Patterson and a historic map replica from the Land Office Archives Collection. The names of all finalists appear at www.savetexashistory.org.

All public, private and home-schooled students of appropriate age for the fourth grade or seventh grade were eligible to participate. Essays for the annual contest are judged

on originality of idea, cohesiveness of thought and organization. Proper grammar, spelling and punctuation counted.

The Texas General Land Office Save Texas History TM program is a statewide initiative to rally public support and private funding for the preservation and promotion of more than 35 million historic maps and documents. With the twin goals of preservation and education, the Save Texas History program seeks to conserve these documents for future generations and educate Texans about the rich heritage found in these vital records. For more details, visit www.savetexashistory.org .

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